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EA/FONSI Log Number: 07-52

2007 Approval of One-year Temporary Warren Act Contracts For the Conveyance of Non-CVP Water in the Delta-Mendota Canal

South-Central California Area Office

Date: May 7, 2007

To:	Natural Resource Specialist	SCC 107	<i>CC</i>	C Eacock	<i>5/16/07</i>
	Natural Resource Specialist	SCC 411	<i>WJ</i>	L Myers	<i>5/14/07</i>
	Secretary	SCC 101	<i>PC</i>	P Escobar	<i>5/14/07</i>
	Acting Chief, Resource Division	SCC 104	<i>EX</i>	V Curley	<i>5-14-07</i>
	Deputy Area Manager	SCC 102	<i>WSSC</i>	W Shipp	<i>5-15-07</i>
	Natural Resource Specialist	SCC 411	<i>MM</i>	L Myers	<i>5/17/07</i>

Cost Authority Number: A10-0863-8943-332-65-0-0

From: Laura Myers

Subject: Review and signing of FONSI

Please review the attached FONSI/EA and route it according to the order on the list. When your review is finished, please date and initial this routing document, and sign on the first page of the FONSI if your name is listed. However, if you have comments or questions please contact the Environmental Team or the proponent of the action. When everyone has signed the FONSI, please return it to Laura Myers.

Thank you.

Ready for Central Files

One (1) Copy each to:

MP-3730

Project Proponent: Sheryl Carter SSC-414/Eileen Jones TO-440
RMD Files

1 copy to Chris Eacock - SCC-107

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Project *CVP*
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

MID-PACIFIC REGION

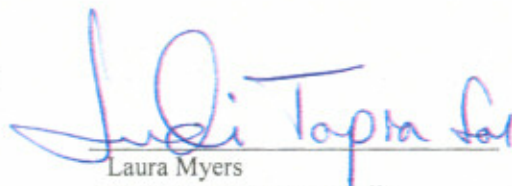
SOUTH-CENTRAL CALIFORNIA AREA OFFICE
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

2007 APPROVAL OF ONE-YEAR TEMPORARY WARREN ACT CONTRACTS
FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF NON-CVP WATER IN THE
DELTA-MENDOTA CANAL

FONSI-07-52

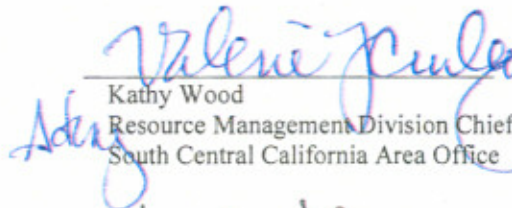
Recommended by:


Laura Myers
Natural Resource Specialist
South Central California Area Office

Date:

5/14/07

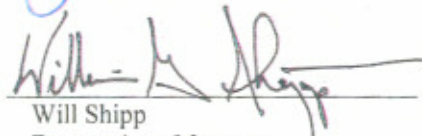
Concurred by:


Kathy Wood
Resource Management Division Chief
South Central California Area Office

Date:

5-14-07

Approved by:


Will Shipp
Deputy Area Manager
South Central California Area Office

Date:

5/15/07

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
2007 APPROVAL OF ONE-YEAR TEMPORARY WARREN ACT CONTRACTS
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In accordance with section 102(2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the South-Central California Area Office of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), has determined that the approval of one-year Warren Act Contracts is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment and an environmental impact statement is not required. This Finding of No Significant Impact is supported by Reclamation's Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) Number EA-07-52, *2007 Approval of One-year Temporary Warren Act Contracts for the Conveyance of Non-CVP Water in the Delta-Mendota Canal*, and is hereby incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND

Reclamation proposes to issue one-year temporary Warren Act Contracts to requesting Central Valley Project (CVP) contractors within the Delta Division and San Luis Unit for up to a combined total of 25,000 AF for the 2007 water year ending February 29, 2008 for the delivery of non-CVP water in the DMC. The source of non-CVP water to be delivered in the DMC would be from groundwater pumping by water districts within the Delta Division and San Luis Units. Conveyance of non-CVP water under a Warren Act contract within Reclamation facilities would also be subject to available capacity as well as water quality standards. The district would pump groundwater from wells close to the DMC directly into the DMC. The amount of water pumped into the DMC would be measured. The district would then take out a like amount from turnouts on the DMC to be conveyed through their distribution systems for agricultural use to water users within the district. The 2007 Water Year has been classified by DWR as "Critical", meaning that less than 2.1 million acre-feet of unimpaired flow are predicted in the San Joaquin River basin. As a result of the dry year, Reclamation has set the water allocation for agricultural South of Delta contractors to 50% for the 2007 Water Year. Water service contractors of the SLDMWA need additional water to supplement their water supply during this water year shortage.

FINDINGS

CVP Facilities: The proposed action would allow efficient delivery of the districts' non-CVP water in dry year when demand is high. No new facilities would be needed as a result of the Proposed Action. There would be no construction or modification to the DMC. The capacity of the facility would remain the same. The Proposed Action would not interfere with the normal operations of DMC, nor would it impede any SWP or CVP obligations to deliver water to other contractors or to local fish and wildlife habitat. Furthermore, the Proposed Action would not interfere in the quantity or timing of diversions from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta. Project operations and facilities would not vary considerably under either alternative. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts to CVP facilities.

Land Use: Under the proposed action, participating districts would receive a small supplemental supply to their CVP water supply. Since water supply allocations have been reduced to 50%, districts must find supplemental supplies in order to meet demand. Groundwater pump-ins from the district would help alleviate some of the effects of water shortage, but most likely additional water supplies

would still be needed. This water would only be used for agricultural purposes on existing crops. No new lands would be cultivated with this water. Therefore, there will be no changes to land use as a result of the proposed action.

Water Supply and Hydrology: Each district requesting a Warren Act contract through this project would be required to submit a groundwater management plan. The total quantity of groundwater that can be pumped into the DMC under the proposed action is 25,000 acre-feet and that quantity is divided among the San Luis Unit contractors and the Delta Division contractors. However, each district would be limited to pumping a quantity below the "safe yield" as established in the groundwater management plan, in order to prevent groundwater overdraft and avoid adverse impacts. Safe yield is defined as the amount of groundwater that can be continuously withdrawn from a basin without adverse impact. The amount of water pumped into the DMC would be credited to that district. Meaning, the quantity of groundwater pumped into the DMC would be delivered back into the district and used for irrigation purposes throughout the originating district. Though some of the water used for irrigation would be used up by evapotranspiration and evaporation, some would also seep back into the ground. The proposed action is a way to get the groundwater into to the district's distribution system for the benefit of all water users within the district's boundaries.

Additionally, water in each well must meet water quality standards prior to approval for conveyance, and the monitoring of groundwater quality would continue throughout the irrigation season. If a well to be used for pumping water into the DMC does not meet the water quality standards, the district would be denied the Warren Act contract. If the well first meets the water quality standards, but then during subsequent testing fails to meet the water quality standards, the district would be required to discontinue pumping immediately. Reclamation staff will monitor salinity in the canal to identify degradation caused by the non-project water, and will work with the Authority and Districts to modify or restrict pumping to improve water quality.

Biological Resources: Most of the habitat types required by species protected by the Endangered Species Act do not occur in the project area. The proposed action will not involve the conversion of any land fallowed and untilled for three or more years. The proposed action also will not change the land use patterns of the cultivated or fallowed fields that do have some value to listed species or birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Due to capacity limitations and water quality restrictions in the Delta-Mendota and Canal, there will be no effects on listed fish species. No critical habitat occurs within the area affected by the proposed action (the action area) and so none of the PCEs of any critical habitat will be affected. Therefore, there will be no effects on threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat.

Cultural Resources: The conveyance of non-CVP water would not harm any cultural resources. It would be conveyed in existing facilities to participating districts. No excavation or construction is required to convey the water and no untilled land will be cultivated with this water. Consequently, the undertaking is not a type of activity with the potential to affect cultural resources eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

Indian Trust Assets: There are no tribes possessing legal property interests held in trust by the United States in the water involved with this action, nor is there such a property interest in the lands designated to receive the water proposed in this action.

Socioeconomic Resources: Under the proposed action, participating districts would receive a small supplemental supply to their CVP water supply. Since water supply allocations have been reduced to 50%, districts must find supplemental supplies in order to meet demand of agriculture production. Groundwater pump-ins from the district would help meet demand and help avoid reduction in agriculture production as a result of the dry year, but most likely additional water supplies would still be needed in order to alleviate all of the effects of the water shortage.

Environmental Justice: Implementing the Proposed Project would not cause any harm to minority or disadvantaged populations within the project area. A Warren Act contract would allow the water districts to use their non-CVP water for irrigation in their service area. The availability of this water would help maintain agricultural production and local employment since 2007 is a dry year.

Cumulative Impacts: Reclamation has made Warren Act Contracts available in previous years whether it was a dry year or not. Most likely this year more districts will be requesting Warren Act Contracts since it is a dry year and groundwater is a potential supplement to the reduced CVP supply. This is a one-year action, and the cumulative amount the districts are limited to under this project is 25,000 AF. However, districts can request a Warren Act Contract separate from this project for up to 10,000 AF of non-CVP water, but this action would be analyzed in a separate environmental document. Additionally, in accordance with the Warren Act, Reclamation will continue to make these contracts available to requesting districts in future years, given that each district meets present and future requirements for Warren Act Contracts.

When combined with other activities within the range of potential impact and the physical study area, neither the No Action Alternative nor the Proposed Action Alternative would add incrementally to existing environmental trends in the region of the Proposed Action.